Rs. 4 crore and effective weapons costing over Rs. 3. crore have been provided to Railway Protection Force. Manpower is also being augmented.

(c) The Railway Protection Force has been providing a daily average of 1217 escort parties in the passenger trains in co-ordination with the State Government w.e.f. 01.07.2004 for which an average of 3712 staff are deployed. 480 Stations on average are also given additional security by Railway Protection Force with deployment of an average 2705 personnel daily. This deployment is in addition to the Government Railway Polic personnel deployed on trains and Railway premises in order to further strengthen the security. Due to increased presence of uniformed personnel, more cases tend to get noticed, noted and registered.

Gauge conversion in Southern Railways

4784. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Southern Railway had fixed a target of 300 km. for gauge conversion this year;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Sourthern Railway had completed gauge conversion of 250 km. during the last year;

(c) what are the routes to be completed during this year for gauge conversion;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the Southern Railway had decided to increase the speed of all express trains; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU) (a) During 2005-06, 308 kms of gauge conversion is targeted for completion on Southern Railway. In addition 55 kms of spill-over of last year (Thanjavur-Tiruvarur section) will also get completed in 2005-06.

(b) During 2004-05, 98 kms of gauge conversion has been completed on Southern Railways in gauge conversion and metropolitan transport plan heads.

(c) During 2005-06, gauge conversion of Kumbakonam-Mayladuturai (32 kms), Manamadurai-Mandapam (96 kms), Trichy-Puddukottai (52 kms), Vridhachalam-Attur (83 kms), Quilon-Punalur (45 kms) and Thanjavur-Tiruvarur (55 kms) metre gauge section is to be completed.

(d) and (e) No, Sir, However, maximum permissible speed of the following trains has been increased to 110 kmph on Chennai Central-Shoranur section:—

1. 1081/1082 Kanniyakumari-Mumbai Express
2. 2007/2008 Chennai-Mysore Shatabadi Express
3. 2607/2608 Chennai-Bangalore Lalbagh Express
4. 2625/2626 New Delhi-Trivandrum Kerala Express
5. 2673/2674 Chennai-Coimbatore Cheran Express
6. 2675/2676 Chennai-Coimbatore Kovai Express
7. 2679/2680 Chennai-Coimbatore Intercity Express
8. 5011/5012 Trivandrum-Gorakhpur Raptisagar Express
9. 5221/5222 Ernakulam-Barauni Express
10. 6041/6042 Chennai-Alleppey Express
11. 6221/6222 Mysore-Chennai Kaveri Express
12. 6325/6326 Indore-Trivandrum Ahilyanagari Express
13. 6327/6328 Bilaspur-Trivandrum Express
14. 6523/6524 Chennai-Bangalore Express
15. 6669/6670 Chennai-Erode Yercaud Express
16. 7229/7230 Kochuveli-Hyderabad Sabari Express
17. 7231/7232 Trivandrum-Hyderabad Express

Transportation of Onion

4785. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BALAPTE:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an ad-hoc Committee of Maharashtra legislature on Onion had called on the Union Minister of State for Railways on November 6, 2003, to request for making special transport arrangements for Onion,